

terrific.

Horseman. A great game. Three good goals.

Hutchinson. Always tried hard, at times greedy.

Referee: 6.

March 30th

Wycombe v Hitchin

More adventure is needed, Mr. B.

By MIKE WHITESMAN : Wycombe W. 2, Hitchin T. 0

ONCE BITTEN, twice shy. But not it would seem Hitchin Town's persistent team manager, Vin Burgess.

On Monday he sent his side onto Loakes Park with a draw in mind, repeating the same mistake he made when these old adversaries met in an F.A. Cup qualifying round tie earlier in the season. And then as now, Wycombe made Town pay for their lack of adventure.

So, in case the message has still not sunk in; with Wycombe chasing hard for the Isthmian League title so invitingly within their grasp, it is suicide to try a closed shop defensive policy against them.

Even with the kind of frustrating dilly-dallying the Wanderers' attack served up on Monday, their continual pressure can eventually crack even the most staunchly resisting backlines.

How tragic — from the Hitchin viewpoint at least — that a forward line, boasting such talented goalscorers as Bernie Gogan and young Paul Giggle, rarely emerged from the shadows to test the blues' defence.

John Maskell — his record now reads 17 "shut-outs" in 30 league games — enjoyed yet another untroubled 90 minutes, while Wycombe's industrious midfield link line kept things on the boil.

Lailey, who missed Saturday's visit to Walthamstow, returned with one of his best and most thoughtful displays in a long time.

To his rear, the uninhibited Peter Suddaby joined colleague and skipper John Delaney in a yo-yo like game of attack and defence. To his front, Searle, Horseman and Hutchinson buzzed busily, if somewhat ineffectively, before the tight marking Hitchin defence.

But the trio broke through often enough to test goalkeeper Turner to the full. On 10 minutes, Horseman ran through to force

Robinson into a late clearance, and 60 seconds later, the left-half almost put through his own goal as he kned down a shot from Keith Searle.

The former Wealdstone striker, playing against the side managed by his ex-team boss, Burgess, remained active. Horseman too, continued to whip up the Wanderers' attack; yet the home fans understandably became infuriated with Wycombe's failure to press home their dominance.

Hitchin lost the injured John Ashworth after 41 minutes, and replaced him with substitute Harley two minutes later.

Searle (twice), and a dashing 30 yarder from Suddaby threatened Hitchin before the interval, and soon into the second half, only a clearance by Howkins prevented a certain Horseman goal. But Tony was injured in that same action and left the field for six minutes' treatment.

The former Wealdstone duo of Searle and Hutchinson looked on the verge of a goal several times in the early minutes of the second period, yet it was John Delaney heading in from a corner kick that first broke the deadlock after 70 minutes.

Having waited so long, Wycombe now rushed forward with renewed vigour, Gogan, sustaining a nosebleed as Wycombe were scoring, left the field until the final five minutes, leaving Town to fend off this new surge with just ten men.

Before he returned, Hutchinson, Searle and Horseman had gone close to making it 2-0, but that distinction eventually came only seconds away from full-time, when Tony put a long through ball upfield for Searle to chase and shoot home into goal off the 'keeper.

Wycombe Wanderers: J. Maskell; I. Rundle, C. Gale; P. Suddaby, J. Delaney, J. Lailey; G. Anthony, B. Baker, K. Searle, A. Horseman, J. Hutchinson. Sub.: K. Blunt (not used).

Hitchin Town: D. Turner; H. Pratt, I. Reid; M. Howkins, J. Ashworth (sub.: A. Harley), P. Robinson; P. Giggle, T. Brothers, B. Gogan, J. Brookes, R. Townsend.

Avenue at a dead end

By LANCE MASTERS

Walthamstow 1, Wycombe 5

WALTHAMSTOW scored in the first minute and briefly re-kindled the flame of their great years in the 1950s before they were snuffed out by Wycombe in the Isthmian League.

Collett's early goal startled Wycombe and certainly flattered Walthamstow, for they never again looked like winning. Once Wycombe found their rhythm, Avenue showed all the muddle which has kept them near the tail end of the league all season.

Apart from some deft wing play by Roseman and hard work in midfield by Mann, this looked one of the worst Walthamstow teams for years. Their failure to control the game was cruelly exposed by a Wycombe side poised to take the league championship.

Source of misery

Top on goal average, just ahead of Barking and Sutton, Wycombe owed much of their dominance to the graft of Blunt and Baker, the shrewdness of Delaney and the marksmanship of Horseman.

Horseman, always seeking the open space, was a constant source of misery to a Walthamstow defence that has conceded nearly 100 cup and league goals. He scored three times, starting with Wycombe's third goal just before half time and adding two more in the first seven minutes of the second half.

Delaney, who gave Horseman one goal by artfully tapping a free kick to him, headed Wycombe's equaliser in the first half. Anthony put them ahead with the goalkeeper drawn out of position.